

making enquiries one of another, the alert malefactor usually skipped out for foreign parts. Consequently, while I was keeper of Clewston's archives, I founded for him an exchange, connected by pneumatic tubes and telephone with every detective system in New York City. I was also connected by telegraph with all the police bureaus in the civilized world; so that if London wished news of an American swindler, we got the information quicker than lightning, and charged accordingly; or if the New York police must have facts which we couldn't supply, we enquired among the other private detective offices, and bought up what was wanted, before any one else had time to think about it. Our office never closed. If work had to be done in New York for other cities, we generally got the contract; and if anything important passed through our exchange we kept a copy, while all the other systems were left in the dark. That's how all the detective offices in the world became branches of Clewston's Bureau."

"Why," said Brand innocently, "it was enough to abolish crime."

"Sir, do you suppose we wanted to abolish crime? Do you imagine that police and detectives are filled with a passionate longing to make themselves unnecessary? A crime farm, young man, is the last development of agriculture. A fool cashier plunders a bank, the bank pays to have him pursued; then he is captured by a detective, and milked like a cow; or else, if he hasn't any plunder, delivered into the hands of justice; for honesty is the best policy of all, besides being good advertising. Yes, young man, the effete European enquiry office returns the plunder to the plundered; an ordinary American detective gets the cash for himself; but Clewston alone is smart enough to send out its officers to rustle on commission. A